The Cruel Mother;

RB.23.a.7784.

BEING

A true Relation of the Bloody

MURTHER

Committed by *M. Cook*, upon her Dearly beloved Child; with the cauſes wherefore ſhe did it: Her occaſional ſpeeches to ſeveral Friends and others that came to viſit her in Priſon, With the manner of her Execution and demeanour there.

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An Exact and True Narrative of the Horrid, Inhumane, and Unnatural MURDER Committed by *M. Cook* upon the Child of her own Bowels.

OF all sins there is no sin cries louder in the ears of God and Man than that of shedding of Bloud; innocent Bloud, What a Hainous, Inhumane, Barbarous and wicked sin it is? and such was the sin here, as hereafter will more largely appear in the insuing Discourse.

The sad occasion of this Relation is one *Mary Cook*, the Wife of *Thomas Cook*, living in *Cloath-Fair* near *Smithfield*, a Mother of three Children, two Sons and one Daughter, which Daughter was the Child of her chief affection, and the subject of her chief affliction, upon whom she pitched to act this horrid Murther, she is aged about thirty seven years, of a very silent melancholly temper, troubling her thoughts too much with care for the things of this world (as with bitter sighs she hath often since acknowledged: She was very subject to conceive discontents to her self, and to construe most passages from her Relations to the worst sense, (whether really or seemingly intended, we will leave to her Relations (who are more nearly concerned) to consider how little, or how far they might contribute to the encrease of her melancholly Spirit, and so hasten her to this Ruine.) We will not charge

them with any thing, only relate what she hath after in private and publick confessed to several that are ready to give a very just account (if occasion require) *Viz.* That her conceived discontents at the unkindness of her Relations (as she supposed) did make her grow so big with melancholly, (a good bait for the Devil to work upon) Her natural life grew a burden to her, and her spiritual life she grew more and more mindless of. So prevalent are the Devils temptations when he meets with such melancholly subjects; and when he had found this way would work about his purposes to her destruction, he was not wanting to stir up instruments to hasten and heighten the same; So at last she comes to enter into secret counsel with the Devil and her own wicked Heart, how to bring her life to an end: At last she resolves upon drowning her self, and had attempted it many months agon, but being providentially met by some that knew her, was disappointed of this sinful and sad purpose: Some months after she resolves upon hanging her self, and to that end got several Sceans of Silk, and in her own Seller was going to act that dreadful Tragedy, but her Husband providentially approaching prevented her.

And it is worthy of note, for all that read this sad storie that still the Devil prevailed with her to keep his Counsel from the knowledge of such friends as might any way discourage her, in the prosecution of this wicked design, by which means he had her linked the faster to his chain, in order to her destruction: For it is more than probable, had she made her temptations know to some sober Christian, means with God and her Heart might have been used, to have plucked her out of this snare of the Devil, but she still persists and now at last resolves to cut her own throat, and but a day or two before she acted this last

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Tragedy, it is obſervable, ſhe a little gave vent to her inſide; had wisdom and Gods bleſſing been obſerved, to have made ſome narrow ſearch into the nature of what ſhe uttered. For upon ſome occaſion of her Husbands being to accompany ſome perſons upon ſuch occaſions as ſhe ſeemed not liking to, did thus reply: if he went, ſhe would then throw her Child in the fire, namely, that little Babe ſhe ſoon after murdered, but by his complyance at this time, ſhe was prevented: But the devil does not leave her, he has her too faſt to loſe his labour; for on the ſixth of *February*, being the Lords day 167⅞ between eight and nine in the morning, ſhe having over-night lodged a knife about her with an intent, (as ſhe hath often ſince confeſſed) to cut her own throat the next opportunity, riſing in the morning ſhe goes down Stairs to make her Fire, and then whets her knife to make it more ready, then puts it to her throat making ſome impreſſion upon her skin, and then with-drew her hand again: Now the Devil that is never wanting to help forward wicked purpoſes, puts her upon a freſh coſultation, what ſhould become of that Child ſhe ſo much loved above the other two Children when ſhe was dead, upon this ſhe conceived better to rid that out of this world firſt, ſo ſhould ſhe by that means come to her own end, upon which ſhe goes up ſtairs, and finding her Husband abſent, ſhe with great violence took the Babe out of the Cradle, a Daughter of about two years and a quarter old and cut its throat, in a ghaſtful manner, the poor Babe (as ſhe hath related) gave three or four lamentable ſighs and ſo departed; immediately ſhe threw it from her upon the fire-Hearth, and then paſſionately ſtamped with her feet; her Husband haſtily running up ſtairs, and at the door asking, *Wife, what is the matter?* She dolefully replies, ſhe had given the Child

its breakfaſt, no ſooner had ſhe ſpoke, but he beheld with an afflicted ſpirit his Babe lie bleeding upon the ground, in which amaze, breaking out into great lamentation, a Lodger and Neighbors approach, and a Chyrurgeon ſent for, but all in vain.

A Conſtable is ſent for to ſecure the Murtherer, by whom ſhe is carried before Sir *W. Turner*, who hearing the Fact with great amazement, committed her to Newgate, where ſhe remained till the Seſſions came, in which time ſhe miſcarried, and was in all likelihood in ſuch a condition as might put a period to her life before Seſſions came. But Divine Providence had otherwiſe decreed, ſhe muſt live to ſatisfie the juſtice of the Law, and be a Terror to deter all others from being guilty of the like Crime: nay, if they have any Grace, from having any thoughts of ſo horrid a Blood-guiltineſs.

During the time of her being in *Newgate*, ſhe continued a woman much dejected in ſpirit and deeply afflicted with melancholy, notwithſtanding the utmoſt of means was uſed both for body and ſoul, as if ſo be God had marked her for an abject of terror to all ſurviving Mothers, both that were ſpectators, and alſo for the future that ſhall hear of, or read this bloody Narrative, her obdurating and impenetrable heart, not being capable to receive that daily ſupply of comfort or conſolation which ſhe had, did much diſcourage the faithful Miniſters and People of God, who was very earneſt with her and God in her behalf; always very ſlow and backward in ſpeech to every thing of good unleſs to the confeſſion of the unnatural, inhumane, notorious, material bowelleſs cut-throat murther: Upon which at the firſt, rather inclined to deſperation, at laſt did believe there was mercy enough, and pardoning grace in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but ſhe could find in her ſelf no

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comfort of it, though desires after it; all this while so far forth as her wicked companions and fellow Prisoners did not by their graceless discourses, and unseemly actions prevent; she implyed in duty: but she told us she could only word it and not heart it: Another time told us that if she could be but once more sensible of the light of Gods countenance being revealed to her, she did not care if she died the next moment (which was the most honest expression that ever we heard from her,) For saith she, the reproachful, ignominious bodily death I do not fear, it is my due debt I ought to pay; but the death of my Soul I dread. She told us a day or two after she had received some comfort, but soon eclipsed, and lost again by reason of melancholy vapours, her intellects being much impair'd, and the Devil improving the present advantage; but her usual request of Ministers and the People of God was not voluntarily, but as the discourse of others made way and exhausted it; Thus you have an account of her quotidial and dayly temper. The Sessions now beginning at Justice Hall in the Old Baily, on the 21. *Feb.* She was there Arraigned and Cast for her life.

By the favour of the Bench, she had a weeks time granted her to prepare for her death; and to die on *Wednesday* the second of *March* in *Smithfield*, over against *Cloth-fair* Gate, where formerly she lived, and committed that out-crying unparallel'd Murther.

Dr. *St.* a very Able and Reverend Divine; was had to her on *Monday* before she suffered, both to see how she was prepared for Death, and to understand the truth as to what might be the occasion of her committing that horrid sin; and that Religion might not be aspersed. He demanded solemnly and seriously, whether that was the occasion of it, and that she would give the truth of it

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as a dying woman; She answered no, there was no such thing: but being prest farther with the same motives, said, she did not believe her Relations to love her so well as they ought, and she being under some distempers of body a week or a fortnight before, and they would not seek out for help; She did it out of revenge to them which she did intend to have done to her self; but going up stairs with the Knife, found the innocent Babe (the Devil turning the temptation) a Deep in the Cradle, took it out and most barbarously Cut the Throat of it, it giving one shrike, and lifting up the eyes to see from whom the the fatal bloody stroke came, and so became the Mothers sinful Sacrifice.

March 1. Being the day before her Execution, her Husband being gone from her most part of the Afternoon, being jealous he was gone to seek her Pardon; she declared to a friend that was with her, That she did not desire a Pardon, but if she could obtain a Pardon in Christ, it was all she desired; continuing very chearful all night, with breathing after Christ, and begging Pardon for her sins. After half an hours rest, which was all she took in the night, her Husband asked her how it was with her, she answered, not so well to boast, she found greater discoveries of Christ to her poor Soul, then she heretofore had and was more chearful and freer to discourse of her condition this day, then any day before, since she came into Prison.

On the day of her Execution, reading *Isaiah* 43. *ver*, 1. *But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O* Jacob, *and he that formed thee, O* Israel, *Fear not: For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.* She said to her Husband, what hath the Lord Redeemed me, such a sinner as I am redeemed?

Being asked by her Husband when she was going into the Cart, If she would not take her Bible with her, she answered she could not boast to the world, she desired a Pardon from Christ in her heart, and said she freely forgave every one, and desired forgivness of all, & that they would pray to God for her, that he would forgive her. Being brought to the place of Execution in Smithfield, a Gibbet being Erected at Clothfair Gate after her Prayers, and Prayers made for her, and many good expressions uttered by her, the Executioner did his Office. She being observed to lift up her hands after she was turned off, so long as she was judged to have any sense left in her.

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